

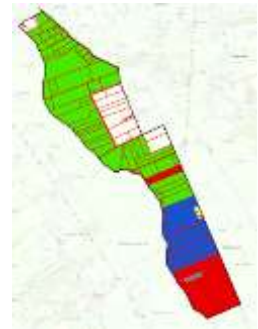


The 'Binnenveldse Hooilanden' (literally translated: Innerfield Hayfields)

The Binnenveld is an area of fen meadows between Wageningen, Ede, Veenendaal and Rhenen. Part of the Binnenveld is reverting back to how it looked a century ago: here, the old flower-rich fen meadows are being restored. For many conservationists, this offers an opportunity for special nature. This is why citizens founded the [Mooi Binnenveld Association](#) – to restore and manage a typical brook-valley ecosystem with many rare species.

The Province of Gelderland was the owner and initiator of the project Binnenveldse Hooilanden to withdraw land from regular agricultural use and initiate the restoration of nature. In 2014, the Province invited the Forestry Commission ([Staatsbosbeheer](#), SBB), the farmers' cooperative ([Coöperatie Binnenveldse Hooilanden](#), CBH) and the citizens' initiative ([Mooi Binnenveld Association](#), MB) to prepare a general layout plan and a joint management plan for the redevelopment of the intended nature. In 2016, the province accepted these plans and the project started.

The Binnenveldse Hooilanden is a new 280-hectare nature reserve owned by Staatsbosbeheer (SBB) (180 ha; green on the map), Mooi Binnenveld (MB) Foundation (50 ha; blue), and Coöperatie Binnenveldse Hooilanden (CBH) (50 ha; red). Together and in close cooperation these three organizations, representing the state, citizens and farmers respectively, manage the 280-hectare of nature. CBH is a cooperative of 7 dairy farmers who jointly own and manage their 50 hectares.



Recreating wet meadows

Before the nature reserve was established in 2019, most of the area was managed as relatively unproductive wet grassland, which had been fertilised for decades. The restoration measures took about one year and were completed in 2020. The nutrient-rich topsoil was removed to a depth of roughly 20 cm and spread on adjacent farmers' fields. This had several benefits: the nutrient load was depleted and the underlying peat was exposed and provided an ideal substrate for the re-establishment of mesotrophic plant communities; the groundwater level was raised within the project area, and at the same time, the nutrient-rich soil was deposited on neighbouring agricultural land. Micro-relief has been created to provide some variation in the landscape. Shallow open drains have been cut to discharge precipitation superficially. This superficial drainage is also expected to stimulate the upward seepage of calcareous groundwater. The original brook, the 'Kromme Eem', has been restored. Many other hydrological measures have been taken to prevent nutrient-rich water from entering the nature area. After the topsoil removal it should take many years for the desired vegetation to develop. To speed up the process, mowings of fresh hay were imported from nearby nature reserves and spread across some of the parcels. In the parcel where a walkway allows visitors to enter the nature area, mowings of fresh hay were brought from different sources. To the east of the walkway hay from 'de Hel' and 'de Blauwe Hel' and to the west of the walkway hay from the 'Bennekomse Meent' was spread. In addition, seed of a few selected species were imported from the Groene Grens, notably Marsh lousewort (*Pedicularis palustris*) was sown to the East and Marsh gentian (*Gentiana pneumonanthe*) to the West of the walkway.

